

Home Isolation Instructions for People with COVID-19

The following recommended CDC guidance is for people who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, regardless of their vaccination status.

HOME CARE

Most people have mild illness and are able to recover at home. Here are steps you can take to help you feel better:

- Rest
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) to reduce fever and pain
- Note that children younger than age 2 should not be given any over-the-counter cold medications without first speaking with a doctor

Treatments used for COVID-19, if needed, should be prescribed by your healthcare provider. Contact your healthcare provider for more information.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE

Seek prompt medical care if your symptoms get worse, especially if you are at higher risk of serious illness. This includes people who are age 65 years and older, pregnant, are severely obese, living in a nursing home, or have a health problem such as a chronic disease or a weak immune system. It is recommended that you seek medical care for serious symptoms, such as:



People with life-threatening symptoms should call 911. Tell the dispatch personnel that you have COVID-19.

If it's not urgent, call ahead before visiting your doctor; you may be able to get advice by phone. If you do visit a healthcare facility, call ahead for further instruction.

STAY HOME (ISOLATE)

Regardless of your vaccination status:

- Stay home (isolate) for at least 5 days.
- Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Do not allow visitors. Stay at least 6 feet from others and always wear a well-fitting mask.
- Avoid contact with pets or other animals while you are sick, if possible.
- If you must leave home to get medical care while you are sick, try to avoid public transportation. Use a personal vehicle if possible. If you cannot drive yourself, keep as much distance as possible between you and the driver, leave the windows down, and wear a well-fitted mask if possible.
- If you do not have someone to help you, if possible, arrange for food and other necessities to be left at your door. If you need to meet someone at your door, wear a mask if possible. If you cannot make arrangements for someone to assist you, please call 211 for assistance.
- You can go outside, like a private balcony or yard, as long as you can maintain a safe distance (6 feet) away from anyone.
- Open windows in shared spaces in the home, if possible, to ensure good air flow.
- Stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home as much as possible. It is particularly important to stay away from people who are at higher risk of serious illness.
- Use a separate bathroom. If this is not possible, clean the bathroom after use.
- After 5 days, wear a well-fitted mask around others for an additional 5 days.

ENDING ISOLATION IF YOU HAVE SYMPTOMS

If you had COVID-19 and had symptoms, isolate for at least 5 days. To calculate your 5-day isolation period, day 0 is your first day of symptoms. Day 1 is the first full day after your symptoms developed.

- You can end isolation after 5 full days if you are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and your other symptoms have improved (Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation).
- You should continue to wear a well-fitting mask around others at home and in public for 5 additional days (day 6 through day 10) after the end of your 5-day isolation period. If you are unable to wear a mask when around others, you should continue to isolate for a full 10 days. Avoid people who are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe disease, and nursing homes and other high-risk settings, until after at least 10 days.
- After you end isolation, avoid travel until a full 10 days after your first day of symptoms.
- Do not go to places where you are unable to wear a mask, such as restaurants and some gyms, and avoid eating around others at home and at work until a full 10 days after your first day of symptoms.

Note that these recommendations on ending isolation do not apply to people with severe COVID-19 or with weakened immune systems (immunocompromised). Please consult with your healthcare provider regarding when you should end isolation if you have severe COVID-19 or have a weakened immune system.

If an individual has access to a test and wants to test, the best approach is to use an antigen test towards the end of the 5-day isolation period. Collect the test sample only if you are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and your other symptoms have improved (loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation). If your test result is positive, you should continue to isolate until day 10. If your test result is negative, you can end isolation, but continue to wear a well-fitting mask around others at home and in public until day 10. Follow additional recommendations for masking and restricting travel as described above.

ENDING ISOLATION IF YOU HAVE NO SYMPTOMS

If you test positive for COVID-19 and never develop symptoms, isolate for at least 5 days. Day 0 is the day of your positive viral test (based on the date you were tested) and day 1 is the first full day after the specimen was collected for your positive test. If you continue to have no symptoms, you can end isolation after at least 5 days.

- You should continue to wear a well-fitting mask around others at home and in public until day 10 (day 6 through day 10). If you are unable to wear a mask when around others, you should continue to isolate for 10 days. Avoid people who are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe disease, and nursing homes and other high-risk settings, until after at least 10 days.
- If you develop symptoms after testing positive, your 5-day isolation period should start over. Day 0 is your first day of symptoms. Follow the recommendations above for ending isolation for people who had COVID-19 and had symptoms.
- Do not travel during your 5-day isolation period. After you end isolation, avoid travel until 10 days after the day of your positive test. If you must travel on days 6-10, wear a well-fitting mask when you are around others for the entire duration of travel. If you are unable to wear a mask, you should not travel during the 10 days after your positive test.
- Do not go to places where you are unable to wear a mask, such as restaurants and some gyms, and avoid eating around others at home and at work until 10 days after the day of your positive test.

If an individual has access to a test and wants to test, the best approach is to use an antigen test towards the end of the 5-day isolation period. Collect the test sample only if you are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and your other symptoms have improved (loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation). If your test result is positive, you should continue to isolate until day 10. If your test result is negative, you can end isolation, but continue to wear a well-fitting mask around others at home and in public until day 10. Follow additional recommendations for masking and restricting travel as described above.

WHOLE HOUSEHOLD IS IN ISOLATION OR QUARANTINE

If you have multiple people in your household who are in quarantine and/or isolation, please work with your health care provider or the health department to determine when each person is safe to return to normal daily activities.

CLOSE CONTACTS

People who were within 6 feet of you for a cumulative 15 minutes during a 24-hour period beginning 2 days prior to your symptom onset or 2 days prior to you testing positive for COVID-19 if no symptoms were present, are considered to be “close contacts.” Please refer to the Self-Quarantine document for close contact guidance.

CONTACT US

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